

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

- 1           1.       (Currently Amended) A locking mechanism for preventing unintended  
2       disconnection of a generally horizontal beam from a vertical support post, said locking  
3       mechanism comprising: ~~post having~~  
4                an array of vertically elongated first openings in said post; overlapped by  
5                an end flange on said beam, said end flange being arranged to overlap said first  
6       openings; with  
7                lugs projecting from a front face of said flange into said first openings, said beam  
8       and flange being vertically shiftable between a raised position at which said lugs are  
9       freely moveable into and out of upper portions of said first openings, and a lowered  
10      position at which said lugs are interlocked with said post in lower portions of said first  
11      openings; ~~said locking mechanism comprising:~~  
12               a resilient plate;  
13               connecting means on opposite sides of a mid-portion of said plate for securing  
14      said plate to a back face of said flange; and  
15               a pin projecting from ~~the~~ a mid-portion of said plate through a second opening in  
16      said flange above one of said lugs and beyond a front face of said flange, said plate being  
17      resiliently deflectable to accommodate retraction of said pin into said second opening  
18      when said lugs are aligned with the upper portions of said first openings, and to urge said  
19      pin into the upper portion of one of said first openings when said lugs are shifted to the  
20      lower portions of said first openings.

1           2.       (Previously Presented) The locking mechanism of claim 1 wherein said  
2     connecting means comprises tabs on said plate, said tabs being received in and deformed  
3     into interlocked engagement within slots in said flange.

1           3.       (Previously Presented) The locking mechanism of claim 2 wherein said  
2     tabs are movable within said slots to accommodate deflection of said plate relative to said  
3     flange.

1           4.       (Previously Presented) The locking mechanism, in accordance with any  
2     one of claims 1-3 wherein said plate is provided with at least one peripheral deformation  
3     configured to coact with the back face of said flange in defining a pocket for receiving a  
4     tool used to resiliently deflect the plate in order to withdraw said pin into said access  
5     opening.

1           5.       (Currently Amended) The locking mechanism in accordance with claim 4  
2     wherein said at least one peripheral deformation is aligned laterally with said pin  
3     projection.